

DR. OSLER SAYS HE MEANT IT.

REITERATES THE USELESSNESS OF MEN AFTER THEY ARE FORTY.

In Preparing an Essay to Prove It—Cites Darwin as an Example—Men Can Make Money After They Are Forty, but as for Advancing the World, No.

BALTIMORE, Feb. 24.—Yes, I meant just what I said about the comparative uselessness of men over 40, said Dr. Osler to-day, speaking of the stir caused by his speech at Johns Hopkins last Wednesday, in which he said that if the sum of human achievement in action, in science, in art, in literature, be subtracted from the work done by the men above 40, we would still be practically where we are to-day.

"I know there are exceptions," he said, "but the exceptions only illustrate the rule. I have spent some time in writing an essay entitled 'La Crise de Quarante Ans' (The Crisis of Forty Years), which will prove what I say. I have not yet finished the essay, and I have been years in accumulating the facts it contains."

"But you were only talking, doctor, weren't you, when you said that all men above 40 were useless?"

"No, sir, I wasn't. I meant what I said and I will prove it when I get my essay finished," returned the doctor.

"Yes, but when you quoted Anthony Trollope in your address about chloroforming men over 40 you stopped and laughed. You were joking then?"

"Of course, I didn't mean that that should be taken seriously," Dr. Osler replied.

"Will you prove your statement concerning men above 40 by citing special cases in your essay?"

"Why, certainly, and plenty of them. Take Darwin as an instance. His greatest work was done when he was a young man exploring South America. He may have made more money after he returned home, but making money and advancing the world are two different things."

"Then your remarks do not at all include that class of men whose possession of great wealth depends on the accidental possession of a wilderness or coal or iron lands by his ancestor?"

"Of course not, they don't count. They live and die and the world goes on just the same. It's the men who do things, who make the world forward, whom I mean. All the essential, germinating, fermenting, vitalizing work is done by men before they reach their fortieth year. There are a few exceptions, but they only illustrate the truth of what I say."

"But, take your life as an instance, doctor. You wrote all your books after your fortieth birthday?"

"Yes," replied the doctor, "but I didn't wait until I was 40 before I gathered my materials for writing those books. I waited purposely. I was too busy before I was 40 gathering the materials and making observations to write books. What is contained in the books is the result of my endeavor before I was 40, and I did it while I gathered it. And then quit work at 40 the world of medicine would be just as far advanced as it is now."

"A man may make money after he is 40, but that is not an indication that he is helping the world along as much as he did before reaching 40. We would not take one step backward if all the work done in the history of the world by men after they were 40 was subtracted from the sum of human achievement."

"UN BALLO IN MASCHERA."

Verdi's Opera With a Star Cast Suddenly Regains Favor.

Verdi's "Un Ballo in Maschera" has taken a new lease of life. It was heard at the Metropolitan Opera House last night by a large audience, and its principal numbers were greeted with vigorous applause, accentuated by cries of "bravo." Those whom it irks to think that operatic music has made progress since the glorieux era or who believe that the well of Italian melody is dried up, will find in the off-scourings of Wagnerism will doubtless accredit this reentry into public favor to the return of sanity in taste, but the bitter sceptics who hold that it is better to be honest than merely beautiful will put down the new lease of life to the combination of Enrico Caruso with several other distinguished stars of Mr. Conried's firmament.

It is a brilliant vocal night that is illumined by Caruso, Scotti, Plancon, Journet, Emma Eames and Landon. The opera, which has been given so benignly last night, and the public basked joyously in their refuge. It is necessary to record only the fact that all were in good voice. Mr. Caruso and Mme. Eames conducted themselves as the two unhappy lovers in a manner "most musical, most melodious, most beautiful," Verdi's plangent tunes sound as if they really meant something.

Mr. Scotti as Renato stalked about with portentous stride and the well-known leman-like embodiment of tragic jealousy, while Mme. Eames as the glittering kypso of the Back Bay district prophesied and sold love charms to Renato with an impudence possible only in New York. As for Plancon and Journet, they carried on their double bass conspiracy just as recklessly as before and moved even the rocky mountain peaks, which the scenery showed in the Brookline district.

MRS. BIRMINGHAM SINGS.

Another Contralto With a Beautiful Voice and Powerful Method.

Mrs. Lillie Birmingham, a contralto from San Francisco, gave a song recital at Mendelssohn Hall yesterday afternoon. Her programme was of the most liberal kind, containing songs by Gluck, Buononcini, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Brahms and others. Even the American composer got a hearing. Mrs. Birmingham is one of those singers to whom nature has been generous for she has a voice of really beautiful quality and abundant power.

But an old story has to be retold. Like many other singers who come before the public this one has not mastered the elements of her art. It is idle to discuss questions of style, of taste, of interpretation, when the technique is radically defective. Mrs. Birmingham's tone production is singularly uneven. She occasionally produces notes faultlessly and when she does they are big, rich, vibrant and in color. But she produces many utterly incorrect notes and then, of course, the quality is bad. In many instances yesterday the bad production was chiefly due to inability to pronounce certain vowel sounds while singing. That she had trouble with the uninitiated German "u" was not astonishing, but she failed even more signally with the sounds of the English long "a" and short "e." She frequently forgot her tones, too, so that she rolled them off their natural excellence. Her best singing was heard in quiet numbers, such as Schubert's "Gretchen." She showed some knowledge of French or German pronunciation.

At the beginning of the concert Mrs. Birmingham was palpably nervous. Just as she arrived at the hall she learned that the fire had broken out in the Burlington, where she lives. Neither the fire nor the nervousness lasted long.

Lieutenant of Fire Company Killed.

MILWAUKEE, Wis., Feb. 24.—Lieut. William Morgan of Engine Company 3 was killed, five other firemen were injured and property valued at between \$35,000 and \$40,000 was destroyed in a fire that broke out in the planing mill of the International Wood Work Company on the South Side.

NEW BOOKS.

Continued from Seventh Page.

man of excellent repute, who turned out to be a student of ancient magic, and who essayed to deprive three young persons of their hearts, to the end that he might improve his own spiritual powers and, perhaps, become immortal. We are glad to say that on the night when he had planned to cut out the heart of his nephew, and in good season so far as that abominable plan was concerned, he was brought to a richly deserved end.

So the stories run. There are eight of them. They are told with an effective simplicity and with touches of humor which are also effective.

He Fought and Wrote.

In "The Chronicles of an Old Campaigner," translated from the French by Walter C. Horsley (E. P. Dutton & Co.), we have the memoirs of M. de la Colonie, a French officer of dragons who fought against Marlborough and the noble Prince Eugene. Mr. Horsley thinks it reasonable to suppose that this work has been overlooked by English translators hitherto. If this is so, a good deal has been overlooked in the respect of quantity. Our chronicler is diffuse. His powers of condensation, if he had any, are not here displayed, and we do not discover that he had any great gifts in the art of selection. The reader will attend to his narrative with difficulty at times. He calls for patience; and yet there is plenty here that is curious and interesting, and we dare say that there are searchers in history who are qualified to tackle it without terrors and gratefully. It has much of a general and historical nature, including maps, and much that is purely personal.

At page 288 we have marked a passage describing a duel between the author and a swordsman of great distinction. We should not dream of quoting the whole of it, for M. de la Colonie is diffuse, as we have said. We may quote a little, however, for the sake of illustration. We read:

"We had some grounds to fear each other. Boisemore was the most apt and skilful man in France in the use of arms, and I was about his match, although bred in a part of the country which, owing to our bringing up and the rude surroundings, makes for clumsiness. However, having left home very young, I had since breathed a purer air, or perhaps nature had worked somewhat in my favor, so Boisemore was aware that he had quite as much to fear of me as of him. We had each made many thrusts and tried all the ruses without success. A bit on either side, though once I thought I had noticed a slight resistance to the point of my sword; but there was nothing to show this in my adversary's expression, and our combat became fiercer and fiercer until we came to close quarters. Then each did his best to trip up his opponent, but so skilful were we both in this art that we found ourselves forced to grapple with each other arm to arm. I proved myself here the stronger, and at the second attempt I grasped my man and presented the point of my sword to the pit of his stomach to force him to give up his arms and cry for mercy; but our two seconds separated us, telling me that as he had his life in my hands I had ended the affair more gloriously than if I killed him outright, and they allowed Boisemore to keep his sword."

Shame upon that celebrated person, no sooner had he got upon his feet than he lunged treacherously and quite unexpectedly at our chronicler and nearly ran him through. "The blade," says M. de la Colonie, "pierced my coat and waistcoat, the usual version, and I passed between my skin and shirt." He threw Boisemore down again after that, and again spared his life; but we are almost glad to say that this treacherous man had received three wounds and needed to go into the hands of a surgeon.

We should like to give more of this chronicle, but perhaps it is not necessary. A proverb says that it is not to drink the whole case in order to learn the taste of the wine. A curious as well as an ample book.

Underground Russia.

Timeliness is the chief merit of Mr. A. Cahan's "The White Terror and the Red" (A. S. Barnes & Co.). It is a story of nihilism and of the assassination of Alexander II., the assassin of the czar, and the work of revolutionists, paying heed to the story that the bureaucracy put Alexis Melnikoff of the way in order to block Louis Alexandroff's proposed reforms. We have an interesting picture of the way in which a boy of reactionary instincts is driven into the nihilist ranks by the spectacle of cruel injustice done to those about him. We have also a picture of the meetings, the chief purpose of which seems to be declamation on abstract subjects. The object of most of the people brought in apparently is not so much to help their country or to do any good as it is to get into jail and enjoy martyrdom.

This may all be true to life. There is absolutely nothing, however, in the book that could not have been obtained easily from the newspapers. There is not a hint as to the revolutionary organization or action, not an incident in the assassination nor in the Jewish massacre that has not appeared before in print in English. As a summary of the wrongs committed on the people by the ruling classes, and a powerful plea against the existing condition in Russia, the book is effective.

It is written in a quaint sort of English that gives the impression of a translation from a foreign language by one not wholly versed in the vernacular. Wrong words are used so frequently as to suggest reliance on a dictionary rather than on personal knowledge of the language. This gives a foreign touch to the story that will seem very Russian to the reader, and many little details would not have been mentioned by anyone that was not familiar with Russian but with English customs.

The Labrador Tragedy.

A remarkable story it is that Mr. Dillon Wallace has written in "The Lure of the Labrador Wild" (Fleming H. Revell Company), and we are much mistaken if it does not become a classic among tales of exploration. The author was the companion of Mr. Leonidas Hubbard in his disastrous attempt to traverse the Labrador peninsula from Hamilton Inlet two years ago. He tells his story in the first person, but his admiration for his leader and for the half-breed Cree Indian, George Elson, who accompanied them is so great that no trace of egotism can be found.

The first part of the expedition seemed like camping out on any summer excursion. Then the explorers found that they had been misled by the maps. Mr. Hubbard's health broke down and they started back just too late. The account of the fight against starvation, to which Mr. Hubbard gave way, and from which Elson barely saved his companion, is wonderful. So is the tale of getting Hubbard's body out of the wilderness to the sea shore and home.

The merit of the story is the clearness and simplicity with which it is told. There is a touch of literary effort, probably borrowed, here and there, and the title is a trifle too sensational. The bulk of Mr. Wallace's narrative, however, is a simple, straightforward statement of facts as they occurred, and it will be found to surpass the greater number of nature books and artistic descriptions of the wilds. The reader may have his doubts as to whether the object to be attained was worth the risk, apart from the catastrophe in which it resulted, but the same question accompanies every excursion into the Arctic or Antarctic regions.

Whatever the outcome, the courage and endurance shown by the explorers is not lost. Foolhardy the expedition may have been, but the reader will find nothing but admiration for the pluck of the lost leader and of his companions who had the luck to be saved.

PUBLICATIONS.

A MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE
By Gordon Holmes
Begin with Bruce, the clever amateur detective, and march your shrewdness against the old Scotland Yard expert.
The clues will be given to you "hot," so that you can work out this mystery just as fast as did Gordon Holmes's brainy pair.
E. J. CLONE PUBLISHER NEW YORK

number of very interesting photographs, which seem to be connected very indirectly with his text.

An excellent and conscientious account of the public schools of New York city has been written by the Secretary of the Board of Education, Mr. A. Eugene Palmer, in "The New York Public School" (Macmillan). The immediate occasion for its compilation is the centenary of the establishment of the free school system. Mr. Palmer tells the story of the public schools from the Dutch days to the present time, including Brooklyn, and in narrower limits The Bronx, Queens and Richmond. Dr. Seth Low writes an introduction. There are illustrations; perhaps the most suggestive are the first free school of 1809, that cost \$13,000, and housed all the pupils, and the \$130,000 building of 1904, with thousands of children that cannot be admitted. It will be a very useful book for reference.

Yulgarity, cheap sentiment and cynicism and a suggestive title have given the "Confessions of a Grass Widow," by Katherine Thyson Marr (Broadway Publishing Company), a very large sale, if the publishers' announcement is to be believed. The book has been out for some time, and is now reprinted. It had no literary or other merits at the outset, and its financial success, if it has had one, has certainly not added any to it.

One of the most thrillingly exciting books that Eugene Sue wrote was the "Mysteres du Peuple." For some reason it never had the popularity of "The Wandering Jew" or of "The Mysteries of Paris," but the stories that made it up were excellent of their kind, and showed, perhaps, more conscientious work than his more famous tales. Daniel De Leon, the Socialist leader, is translating the book into English with a propagandist object, which is absurd, as Eugene Sue was a romancer pure and simple. Parts of the book have been translated before, but even the French original is not easy to get nowadays. Mr. De Leon drops the connecting story and prints the episodes as separate short stories, a course in which he is justified, for he thereby does little harm to the author, whose framework was utterly thin. Two parts have come to us, "The Gold Sickle" and "The Infant's Skull" (New York Labor News Company). There will be nineteen stories in all. French scholars might pick flaws in the translator's work, but it is readable enough, and, after all, it is not for his style that people read Sue. The substance is here.

From the manuscripts left behind and from his printed books, another volume of excerpts of Philippe Brooks's sayings suited to the Lenten season has been made by Mr. W. M. L. Jay, to which he gives the title "Christ the Life and the Light" (E. P. Dutton & Co.). The little volume will prove acceptable to many outside the Episcopal community as well as in it. Two well done little books appear in a series called "The Music of the Masters," edited by Mr. Wakeling Day (Brentano's). They give a deal of information that will prove useful to people who attend concerts and the opera and who not only wish to talk about what they have heard but to have some idea of it themselves. Mr. Ernest Newman's "Wagner" gives a brief, intelligible account not only of the composer and his operas but also of other composers, and should be satisfactory to all but out and out Wagner maniacs. In dealing with "Tchaikowski" Mr. E. Markham Lee has a more difficult task, for it is almost impossible to describe purely instrumental music words. Still he provides his readers with the material with which to talk glibly and with seeming intelligence about the Russian composer.

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To every man that loves a dog the new work put together by Mr. James Watson with the title "The Dog Book," and issued in parts by Doubleday, Page & Co., will be very welcome. If any man knows about dogs it is Mr. Watson. The first part is devoted to giving suggestions about the dog lover. We look for more interesting matter when he comes to the different species of dogs, where every man may find his own dog, the dog he loves, described.

Books Received.
"National Salvation." C. A. Stephens. M. D. (The Laboratory, Norway, Me.).
"The Girl of La Gloria." Clara Driscoll. (G. P. Putnam's Sons).
"The Prize to the Hardy." Alice Winter. (The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis).
"The Mother Light." (Appleton).
"The Mystery of the Red Room." (Appleton).

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D. APPLETON & COMPANY, NEW YORK

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Nation's Ward of the Republic, Series I, Vol. 18 (Government Publishing Office, Washington).

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STUDENTS IN NEW PLAYS.

Three Creditable Performances by the Stanhope-Whitcroft School.

At the matinee of the students of the Stanhope-Whitcroft Dramatic School, held yesterday at the Garrick, two one act plays were given for the first time. "The Devil's Wooling," a rather pretty comedy, by Florence G. Ruthven, and "The Picture Hat," a farce turning on a milliner's bill which a young husband incurred by sitting on the hat of a strange woman at a fancy ball. "When the Wheels Run Down," a drama in one act by Maude M. Rogers, was given its first production in New York.

Several substitutions had to be made in the cast at the last moment, on account of illness, but the performances went off creditably.

TO ACT IN HIS OWN MELODRAMA.

Theodore Kremer, Maker of Thrillers, Is to Go on the Stage.

Theodore Kremer has signed a contract with A. H. Woods to start next fall in a piece written by himself. Mr. Kremer's season will cover a period of eighteen weeks, and he will visit the principal cities. He was an actor before he took to writing melodramas. He is now making the play he will star in.

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The judges of the St. Louis Exposition acknowledge the superiority of our goods by placing them beyond competition.

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